EIGHTY-EIGHT LINES

BY WAY OF

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ON

The late *Rev.* Mr. THOMAS NEWNHAM.

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ON

The late *Reverend* Mr. THOMAS NEWNHAM,

A MINOR CANON OF

BRISTOL CATHEDRAL,

DESCRIBING THE VERY REMARKABLE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS DEATH, AS COMPARED WITH SOME PASSAGES IN THE

EIGHTY-EIGHTH *PSALM.*

By THOMAS MARSH.

Attempted in Mr. Shenstone's Manner.

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APOLOGY.

THE Subject of the following Lines having been almoſt univerſally known, the Author imagined that it might, before this time, have employed ſome abler Hand to treat it with the Attention it ſeem'd to deſerve. No Attempt has been made he believes—— but his Thoughts having frequently turned upon the melancholy Occaſion, he found himſelf, by degrees, in poſſeſſion of a few Stanzas which bore the Appearance of an Elegy. It had lain by him in Manuſcript a great while, and he had no Intention to publiſh it— not from any Perſuaſion he had received to the contrary, but from a Diffidence which is natural, and a Deſire, which moſt People have, to conceal their Defects from the World, rather than expoſe them. But underſtanding that an imperfect Copy has lately appeared in a Magazine, he is induced, not without the Solicitations of ſeveral Friends, to ſubmit this moſt reſpectfully to the Public as the only authentic one: preſuming to rely upon the Indulgence which young Authors uſually expect.

EIGHTY-EIGHT LINES

BY WAY OF

E L E G Y.

PARENTS attend, and Lovers hear:—
While I my tender tale rehearſe,
That often faulters with a tear;
As pity prompts the tardy verſe.

Lov'd

Lov'd was the generous Youth I mourn:
For he was pious, meek, and kind.
Him did a graceful mien adorn
With every gift and charm of mind.

His eye, the index of his heart,
Was bright with joy or dim with grief,
As he in other's bliſs took part,
Or ſought, for wretchedneſs, relief.

A father's hope— a mother's pride:
And priz'd ah! much— by many a friend:
And more than dear to *one* beſide;
Whoſe fond regret not ſoon ſhall end.

Oft

Oft had ſhe caught the riſing ſounds
His MAKER's praiſe when NEWNHAM ſung;
Where, ſhrill the Organ ſtill rebounds,
But not alas!— *his* tuneful tongue:

Oh! when he led the loud full choir,
What ſtrains of thrilling tranſport flow'd!
We felt— not vainly to admire,
For only heav'nly rapture glow'd.

Can BRISTOL loſe ſo fair a flow'r,
And not a ſign of ſorrow wear?
And not lament the fatal hour,
That reft us of a life ſo dear!

The ſeventeenth day of March was come:
The year of woes was ſeventy-five.
(Sure Heav'n has mark'd each mortal's doom
Long 'ere the dreadful day arrive.)

The eighty-eighth foreboding Pſalm
That morning 'twas his lot to read:
His voice was clear— his boſom calm,
When he pronounc'd the death decreed.

(Thy ways paſt finding out O Lord!
Supreme Diſpoſer of all Fate!
My lips are fearful to record
And tremble while they would relate.)

With

With him that afternoon were three:——
(And thro' the ſunny fields they rov'd)
His ſiſter and a friend, and ſhe
Who more than friend or ſiſter lov'd.

He choſe that laſt, that penſive road
Which tow'rds the dreary Cavern bent,
Where darkneſs makes it's foul abode,
And bleak and howling winds are pent.

Where long has reign'd the chilling gloom
That ne'er receives the Solar beam:
And o'er whoſe wide and wat'ry womb
Deſtruction gapes, and horrors gleam.

Near

Near it's half-ſhut half-yawning mouth
A tree o'erſlants the ſmooth deſcent;
Whoſe bending trunk, whoſe friendly growth
Oft to the *raſh* an aid has lent.

There he unreav'd the life-ſpun twine:
And one fond look juſt glancing round;
'See here, he ſaid, 'the LEAD and LINE,
'With which I mean this depth to ſound.'

'But, go not near— his true-love cried,
His friend, his ſiſter cried 'take care,'
Ere yet he reach'd with haſty ſtride
The verge of danger and deſpair.

But

But who ſhall paint the damſel's mind?
The friend's, the ſiſter's fright recall?
That moment—when their ſhrieks they join'd,
Eye-witneſſes to NEWNHAM's fall.——

Senſe ſhudders at the bare alarm—
And yet not void of thought was he:
For, when he ſlipt, he threw his arm
And graſp'd the twig which— left the tree.

'Ah!— take me too— thou hideous grave!
'Take— hide me, where my Life is laid,
'In thy cold *priſon*— all I crave'——
Cried the diſtracted lovely maid.

No

'No joys no hopes my ſoul befit,
'No reſt but his unceaſing ſleep,
'Shar'd with him in the *loweſt pit*,
'*The place of darkneſs and the deep.*

'To me whoſe grief no grief tranſcends
'No more that face ſhall yield delight:
'*Hid from his lovers and his friends*——
'*From his acquaintance out of ſight.*'

What anguiſh ſeiz'd the good old pair
Their much-lov'd Son's ſad fate to know,
Let ſilence ſpeak in dumb deſpair:
But this is ſure enough of Woe.